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Ultimate tests

By Graham Martin

SAINT-JOHN PERSE:

Chant pour un équinéoxe
11pp. Paris: Gallimard, 27fr.

JACQUES DUPIN:

Dehors
159pp. Paris: Gallimard, 27fr.

MICHEL DEGUY:

Reliefs
143pp. Paris: D'Atelier.

Here, posthumously, comes a group of Saint-John Perse's short poems with long rhythms. It should be noted that the poems "Chant pour un équinéoxe" and "Chant par elle qui fut" have been changed very slightly from their layout in the Pléiade edition of the *Oeuvres complètes*, and that we have here two additional poems, "Sécheresse" and "Nocturne", which do not appear there.

Perse has not lost his faith in the goddess of illusion, Maya, nor in the cyclical forces of nature that she rules. But the tone of *Chant pour un équinéoxe* is more elegiac than celebratory: "Ecoute, ô cœur fidèle, ce balancement sous terre d'une aile incorruptible." And the lesson of "Sécheresse" is summed up in "Songe de Dieu sois-nous complice...". Singe de Dieu, rêve sans ruse! The veil of reality is about to be torn, and if Perse faces this last mystery with stoical courage, a belief in the ultimate rightness of things, and an ironic acceptance of the departure of the illusion of individual life, this is his right, just as it is the right of others to assert the opposite and equal conclusion, that darkness is merely darkness. The underlying note is one of sad resignation rather than of optimism, and can be summed up in the last line of "Nocturne": "A son pas de lieue de gerbes s'en va la vie sans haine ni rancune." For Perse, these poems are brief, but they are as fine as anything he has done.

Jacques Dupin's new collection is among his most powerful and confident to date, showing considerable variety of techniques and a very sure verbal touch, in which the half-sensed, troubling profundity of our questions is wonderfully evoked. Some passages here approach nightmare (as in the section "Sens"), and the harsh underlying violence of Dupin's world is made quite plain. One is tempted sometimes to think that this is the ultimate test of a poet's language: can it face darkness without breaking in the process, without revealing its own inadequacy (except to make of it a triumphantly overcomer, and, facing the horrible image of death, Dupin replies: "Contre ça, rien, nous, le soleil et la dynamique du songe, le attentif...").

Neither the negatives of human pain nor the positives of human life are denied, but each questioning each other in bitter and unresolved contradiction. Dupin is feeling the whole truth, and the fact justifies the tint intensity and explains the sense of urgent life which infuses his poetry.

Finally, let us descend from poetry to theory. *Reliefs* is a series of witty fragments in which Michel Deguy questions himself or is questioned by others. It ranges from a moment of political speculation to a single fragment of pure thought, and is one of two revealing essays.

Avant-garde insights

WALTER SITI:

Il Realismo dell'avanguardia
116pp. Turin: Einaudi, L. 1400.

The eight essays collected in this first book by one of Italy's young theoretical writers offer a continuous and convincing analysis of the concept of the avant-garde. Using a rather odd mixture of insights from classical rhetoric and early twentieth-century Italian poetry, Walter Siti argues his analysis of the linguistic weaknesses of poetry in a somewhat exuberant and social interpretation of the Italian

on his work by others. The atmosphere in which such texts are written is perhaps difficult for the British mind to come to terms with; but it must be said at once that Deguy is not a structuralist, and that any obscurities in his writing have been validated in advance, as it were, by his own standing as one of France's most exciting poets. His love of metaphor and wit, his sometimes painful searching for the meaning of poetry; his studies of Heidegger and Hegel; these elements of his mind do not always make for easy reading. But the effort is repaid.

Deguy is far from that modern dogmatism which gives but one definition of poetry, and that, of course, always the writer's own: "Je me méfie de mes réactions" et du dogmatisme rampant de certains vulgarisateurs d'avant-garde. We may take pleasure in the luminous clarity of his reply to Alain Jouffroy, and his real concern to achieve a common position rather than one from which the protagonist could condemn any other. And we shall finally have ourselves time to meditate on such passages as his statement of personal belief on the nature of poetry, which are distinguished by his real concern for, and tentative confidence in, poetry as a mode of knowledge, or rather as a mode of inquiry into what lies at knowledge's outer frontier.

I should like to append a further remark on Jacques Réda's *La Tourne* (October 10, 1975), since some of my observations were omitted, and a false impression may have been given. I do not doubt about extremely fine collection, in which the poet again shows his own very personal ability to illuminate an unseen reality lying behind the tangled foliage of language and experience.

A season in paradise

By Martin Turnell

MARCEL JOUHANDEAU:

Paroisse
Journées XXII: février 1967, Juillet 1968
360pp. Paris: Gallimard, 42fr.

Marcel Jouhanneau's readers will remember that the last volume of *Journées* ended in a state of excitement. A judge had appointed the poet to the post of literary director of the day, the illegitimate daughter, as the child's guardian, but it was agreed that he should be brought up by the Jouhanneaus, whose home he was due to arrive the following day. His arrival is greeted with rapture. "Singe de Dieu, nous le sommes, nous le sommes, nous le sommes," we are told, "the house is no longer a child's. It is a temple where a child sleeps." The religious comparison is continued in the description of his sleep. "Marc nearly always sleeps on his back, his arms stretched out, his face that of a martyr in ecstasy." We are told that what is described as the child's divine charge, preying on Marc's mind from the beginning of the invitations of friends because he cannot bear to be separated from Marc even temporarily, and that Marc himself is miserable when he has to leave merely to spend a weekend with his aunt.

One of the most striking effects is that the presence of Marc brings the ill-assorted husband and wife together again. "Never for at least twenty-five years," says M. Jouhanneau, "have I felt myself closer to my wife than now." The typical remarks: "Où est l'ange

trinity that we form, He, Elise and I?" Yet in spite of the rapture which greets Marc's arrival, life does not turn out to be as peaceful as we should expect. "This child who knows hell in his family, purgatory in the hospital and who today finds himself in paradise with us cannot free himself from his memories." Although the couple are devoted to the child, it is evident that he not only remains memories of the past, but has inherited some of the ill-nature and violence of his mother. For all his devotion, M. Jouhanneau makes no attempt to conceal the vicissitudes. "With me Marc hesitates between adoration when we are in agreement, his conclusion, repeated a number of times, is that 'his intimate and essential nature is that of a tyrant. Instinctively, as soon as one resists him, he strikes and bites'."

The clothes are not restricted to the husband. Marc appears to some extent to share Elise's devotion, but it does not prevent clashes between them. Her reaction is much tougher than her husband's. She not infrequently threatens to throw the child out of the imaginary "paradise" and even to send him back to the "purgatory" when

spontaneous two years recovering from brutal injury inflicted on him. Céline's husband in the "heli".

In spite of the troubles, the title shows that the present Marc leads to a great change. He goes into the hospital, and the book is equally exciting for the reader. Although we are told that "I have only two interests in life, Marc and my work," we hear little about his work as a writer. But the man who is writing about the lectures he gives about the book is equally excited. "I have only two interests in life, Marc and my work," we hear little about his work as a writer. But the man who is writing about the lectures he gives about the book is equally excited. "I have only two interests in life, Marc and my work," we hear little about his work as a writer. But the man who is writing about the lectures he gives about the book is equally excited.

A HAUNTING, UNFORGETTABLE NOVEL

ANYA

by SUSAN FROMBERG SCHAEFFER

"Miss Schaeffer manages to convince the reader that, however bizarre her events, they could not possibly have happened in any other way. The final impression is a deeply moving one."

FRANCIS KING, *Sunday Telegraph*

"No other book that I have read has made me participate to such a degree in the bewilderment and pain of civilians trapped in the dangerous and degrading of total war."

JOHN MELLORS, *The Listener*

CASSELL

LITERATURE

Classical landscapes

By Quentin Anderson

FRANK KERMODE:

The Classic
141pp. Faber and Faber. £3.50.

Frank Kermode's *Romantic Image* (1957) was extraordinarily persuasive and sensible in coping with the use of changing images to figure our transient lives. He amplified the theme in *The Sense of an Ending*, which treated the use of "fictions" to make sense of our lives. His chief emphasis is upon how fictions deal with our literally unrealizable mortality. The occasion of *The Classic*, the T. S. Eliot Memorial Lectures at Kent, led Professor Kermode to return to the question of the ways in which books satisfy us, this time with an emphasis which detaches them from the context of individual need. Classics transcend the generations; they are, he seems to feel, outside of history, and receive analytic treatment; Kermode calls on French "literary science" to help him deal with them.

The first of his four chapters treats much of the ground traversed by Eliot in a 1944 lecture on Virgil, "What is a Classic?", but adds a good deal of scholarly commentary. Eliot, he says, had described the "homologous with that of world history". The poet's grounds are complex: Virgil wrote during the Roman ascendancy, the high-water mark of civility and the world as we know it, but he was also writing at a time when the world was being re-created by the full appropriation of its powers. Eliot regards him as the unique progenitor of the literatures which arose in the vulgar tongues, of which Dante's work is the prime example. Professor Kermode's second chapter considers these conclusions of Eliot's in connection with the transmission of the linguistic and imperial heritage to England, Marvell's meditation of it, Milton's refusal of imperial decadence, and the neoclassical adaptation and diminution of the inheritance.

In the third chapter there is an abrupt turn to the west; Professor

Kermode gives a rather questionable account of the effect of the classical heritage on colonial and early republican America. This is a prelude to the examination of an oddly chosen "modern" classic, Hawthorne's *The House of the Seven Gables*, which (together with *The Scarlet Letter* and *The Marble Faun*) is said to be modern in that it poses "a virtually infinite set of questions". The fourth chapter has a brilliant paradigmatic reading of *Wuthering Heights*, and makes explicit Kermode's subscription to some of the procedures of French criticism. In effect, books are removed from human history on the ground that the possibilities of interpretation are infinite.

The descent on the American strand in the third chapter is altogether graceful. The colonial and early republican periods are treated without reference to Locke and the Enlightenment. Despite Howard Mumford Jones, on whom Professor Kermode seems to heavily, the topos on the status of American worthies have scant imperial reference. It is hardly the case that early nineteenth-century America had a "deep-seated conviction of an imperial destiny". The political scientists have grown more emphatic about the Declaration of Independence proclaimed the right to a generic eighteenth-century value, liberty; to be secured by whatever means; the Constitution was heavily, the topos on the status of American worthies have scant imperial reference. It is hardly the case that early nineteenth-century America had a "deep-seated conviction of an imperial destiny". The political scientists have grown more emphatic about the Declaration of Independence proclaimed the right to a generic eighteenth-century value, liberty; to be secured by whatever means; the Constitution was heavily, the topos on the status of American worthies have scant imperial reference. It is hardly the case that early nineteenth-century America had a "deep-seated conviction of an imperial destiny".

There are other difficulties (for instance, it is very hard to believe that Hawthorne's view of the significance of the need for Latin was recognized). He overlooks the medieval cast of early instruction at Harvard, where the seven arts and the three philosophies were central.

Tom and Hem

By B. C. Bloomfield

ALEXANDER SACKTON (Compiler):

The T. S. Eliot Collection of the University of Texas at Austin
407pp. Humanities Research Center of the University of Texas at Austin, 1975, £18.95.

AUDRE HANNEMAN:
Supplement to Ernest Hemingway
A Comprehensive Bibliography
405pp. Princeton University Press, £11.70.

The University of Texas, and particularly the Humanities Research Center, has in the past taken some stick in these columns and elsewhere for its alleged "saturation" buying of the manuscripts, working papers, first editions, and any and all modern English and American writers. To this allegation have been added two more: that once catalogued and neither have they been available to outside readers; and that the University of Texas and now here a catalogue of the university's library holdings relating to T. S. Eliot, particularly handily produced, (I can only find one misprint, "Goulden" for "Goulden" on page 25.)

The Texas collection is built on the libraries of Leonidas Payne, Philip Markey, A. A. Knopf, Frederic Prokopenko, and Mary Travençolo, among others, and what a rich collection it is, now is. Most of the rarities are there in about three or four mostly inscribed or presentation copies and a very high proportion of the B items. The bibliography is present. (There is also some material supplementary to the Eliot, but not in general of great importance.) The strength of this catalogue lies in its detailed listing of letters from Eliot to various correspondents, and the correct form.

are "Pynchon"—I am adopting Kermode's highly plausible interpretation—which may be read "punchon" (an instrument used to engrave type), "Punchon" (a mail or messenger used to strike the postmen), and "Holgrave" (a dagger or cut-throat). (enraver of the whole) whose punchon is the sun itself striking the plate, and who may therefore be said to employ a "natural" means. Kermode's thesis of the degradation of "types" (species) in America enters in, as does Jefferson's attempt at refutation of it, the theory of catastrophism in Hawthorne's famous contemporary, Agassiz, the theories of early evolutionists, and so on. Hawthorne was clearly occupied with these matters, and his admirers will not in future neglect the degradation of the breed of hens kept by the Pynchons.

Hawthorne's characters in this novel are an overbearing rich man, who has secured the imprisonment for murder of his cousin, an innocent aesthete, thereby depriving him of property and sensuous pleasures; a proud spinster who is humanized by affection; a domestic agent whose iron subduer is the virtuous Yankee who is a jack-of-all-trades; and a comic rustic. These persons are moved by wholly conventional emotions to wholly expectable ends; the novel may be said to dwell on the point of downward. But explication of Hawthorne's interest in types Professor Kermode has made it more interesting, but "classic" is hardly the word for it. It contains no such magnificent figure as Hester Prynne in *The Scarlet Letter*, or the title *The Blithedale Romance* to call into question the capacity of a whole social world to employ their energies to creative ends; it does not approach the fateful personal and social dialectic which is Hawthorne's great theme—symbolized in his description of Zenobia's relation to Westervelt, "Her deepest voice lacks a response; the deeper her cry, the more dead his silence."

Hawthorne's central concern, only marginally present in *The House of the Seven Gables*, is "the truth of the human heart", and, as Merius Bewley long ago suggested, this is only revealed in individual responses to the claims of familial and communal relations. But explication of Hawthorne's interest in types Professor Kermode has made it more interesting, but "classic" is hardly the word for it. It contains no such magnificent figure as Hester Prynne in *The Scarlet Letter*, or the title *The Blithedale Romance* to call into question the capacity of a whole social world to employ their energies to creative ends; it does not approach the fateful personal and social dialectic which is Hawthorne's great theme—symbolized in his description of Zenobia's relation to Westervelt, "Her deepest voice lacks a response; the deeper her cry, the more dead his silence."

Here one is on familiar American ground: the individual is endowed with a wholly sufficient portion of the world; he no longer depends on God or society to validate his sense of himself; like Emerson or Whitman he has a total vision. In *Poetry of Reality*, J. Hillis Miller has said that the "truth of the human heart" is the truth of the world; he no longer depends on God or society to validate his sense of himself; like Emerson or Whitman he has a total vision. In *Poetry of Reality*, J. Hillis Miller has said that the "truth of the human heart" is the truth of the world; he no longer depends on God or society to validate his sense of himself; like Emerson or Whitman he has a total vision.

I conclude that the same emotional need is served by a joy in the success of Stevens's effort to do what God had formerly done as is served by the sense that the classic will not submit to our intelligence, and will go on in doing significance far ever. Both are a difference, critical views. Professor Kermode's proposals in his fourth chapter amount to something major, a revision in the context of criticism itself.

The chapter opens with a schematic interpretation of *Wuthering Heights*. Professor Kermode is trying to do what God had formerly done as is served by the sense that the classic will not submit to our intelligence, and will go on in doing significance far ever. Both are a difference, critical views. Professor Kermode's proposals in his fourth chapter amount to something major, a revision in the context of criticism itself.

The second Catherine reverses the order, and this movement from the Heights to the Grange and back again is in each case mediated by Heathcliff. All this reinforces the suggestion by the order of the inscriptions Lockwood finds in the sleeping closet at the Heights; she is successively an Earnshaw, a Heathcliff (or identified with Heathcliff) and a Linton.

We are conscious that religion has a share in Eliot's world, but it does not have for most of us. He saw religion and art as related but distinct. We appear to have lost sight of the distinction. Accounts of art as terminal, that is, enabling an ultimate possession of the world, or accounts of art as interminable, that is, serving as a never-ending source of value distinct from the changing human world, both look like surrogates for religious values. It is as if art has stepped into the place religion once occupied.

If criticism occupies itself with accounts of such finalities as these, if it becomes as disjointed from questions of value and purpose as structuralism or positivistic social sciences will lose its office in the world, it is hard to imagine a human power greater than that which creates the perspective in which human possibilities are viewed, and for that it is not exercised in view of art, or that we cannot offer critical recognition and appraisal when it appears, is not simply to take the classics out of history, but to make them as intractable as the stars.

Paul Boythek

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ANDRÉ STOLL:

Asterix, das Triclaupus Frankreichs Bild- und Sprachwitz eines Best-seller-Comics
185pp. Cologne: DeMont Schauberg.

A return to the subject of the Asterix books is for me the occasion of some embarrassment, since it reminds me of what I wrote hereabouts some eighteen months ago, in celebration of Goscinny and Uderzo's *magna opera*. It was a case of wishful thinking. "Up to now," I proclaimed, "the great thing about Asterix, the comic-book Gaul, has been that he has remained a creature of the printed page, and of the imagination... he and his tribe hardly venture, as far as I know—not nearly far enough, as I proved—from between the shiny covers provided for them by DeMont Schauberg. It is a great coup to secure the rights for such a rare excursion... Asterix's hard-to-get policy... and so on. This turned out to be a naive mistake—as I began to suspect only a week after publication, when, on holiday in Florence, I passed a stationer's window displaying a floppy-bound product called "Diarix", the Asterix diary.

The German scholar André Stoll was at that very time amassing the facts for his book *Asterix, das Triclaupus Frankreichs*, like Obelix's wild boar, some of these facts, while perhaps a little frightening, are quite palatable. For example, the first Asterix adventure in 1961 commanded a first edition printing of 5000 copies; the second ran to 20,000; the third, 40,000; and, within five years, the initial printing-order had exceeded the million mark, reaching 1,200,000 with *Asterix et les Normands* and *La Bouclier Arverne*. No harm done, perhaps: though the sheer dominance of the series over all others is made plain when you realise that the sales figure built up by the Asterix books in the German market has been equalled by the first Asterix volume alone: approximately 23 million copies.

To have realised the admen's blunders under these geometrically progressing circumstances would have been an act of Obelisk self-sufficiency on the part of his creators. So one cannot blame them for what Stoll's book goes on to reveal: that Asterix graduated to

black-and-white film in 1967, and in 1972 to colour; that he has been a noted radio and recording artist for years, his voice ("eine tiefen, kriechende, Altköcher-Musik") just the sort of squeak I hoped he would never acquire) having been outdressed only by Johnny Halliday's in the aggregated 1967 Parade of 1967; and that licences for the use of Asterix and Obelix in advertising have been out of sale, from a separate company formed for the purpose, for almost ten years now, during which time the heroes' faces have been auctioned off in everyone from toy manufacturers to the food industry.

"Hundreds of articles" have recruited them, according to Stoll. Good heavens, even the first French satellite, launched in 1965, bore Asterix's name. "Asterix ist überall," Stoll says, with veneration. I noted the phrase, as you may imagine, glumly, knowing that the final disappoinment—that of actually seeing these sleek, unkempt and variants of Ludo packaged in Asterix's name—still awaits.

Stoll's book, however, is in no way to be taken as another symptom of Asterix's descent into the supermarket. It is not a journalistic success but an extremely involved attempt to account for it by examination of its values. You have to take Stoll seriously, even if his table of contents is hard to swallow, with headings like "Kontextualisierung des Asterix-Phänomens", "Zur Semiotik des Comic-Strips", and "Rhetorische Solidarität und humanitäre Engagement in Diktator der Subversion", upon which not even Bagdanovich could have improved. As the proportion of French (origin) in these formulations shows, the German language is in for a bit of a stretching in the pages to come; the argument will be conducted in the standard, abstracts of modern PhD studies, and one is going to be hard pressed at times to resist invoking the call-sign of the *Geisteswissenschaft* with a quiver. "The comic figure, the academic," Stoll writes, "is a figure of the malice of those who see the Germans as deficient in humour of their own, and condemned to analysing everyone else—for Stoll can be a laborious explicator of jokes. But given that the German language is relatively difficult to put through comical hoops, and a particularly arduous performer in the service of the punster—the German word for pun, *Wortspiel*, is revealingly

unspecific—Stoll deserves some sympathy in his efforts to put the fun back into, say, a name like *Claudius*. Malotius ("mal-audius"), for which Asterix's German translator, finding no usable echoes in the German for *sinu-pu* ("Schmerz in der Stirnhöhle"), offers the weak alternative *Claudius* (Goscinny's coinage). Behind the whole study one senses a certain resignation, a feeling that losses in translation can never be recouped; and in a final chapterlet, actual pessimism crystallizes out into figures. You wouldn't go far wrong, says Stoll, if you reckoned that 70 to 80 per cent of the original word-play falls to survive the journey over the border to Germany. But this has merely made Stoll work all the harder at emphasizing the surface humour to be seen (and not the *Freundwörter* again) "in der Karikatur, in den toussendel Slapstick-Gags, in den Prügeln (punch-ups), im Duktus", and at placing the work of Goscinny and Uderzo in a historical, cultural and even political context that can be appreciated internationally. Let the jokes fall where they may, motifs and themes survive.

Stoll's researches at once reveal unsuspected circumstances behind the creation of Asterix—notably the law passed in 1949 to govern printed matter for children in France. Drawn up obviously in opposition to American influence, and in fear of some future rebirth of fascism, this Act banned all glorifications of naked power, splendid physical specimens, of the Tarzan/Batman/Superman type tended to qualify without moving a muscle. When Goscinny and Uderzo got together in the late 1950s, collaborating for a time on an earthbound project called "Oumpah-Peh, the Redskins", comic artists were still wary of contravening regulations; so it is no wonder that the heroes we know today are neither physically admirable nor capable of anything but the most curiously winces attitude to their own talents for violence. "The comic figure," Stoll writes, "is not to be denied, as a figure of the malice of those who see the Germans as deficient in humour of their own, and condemned to analysing everyone else—for Stoll can be a laborious explicator of jokes. But given that the German language is relatively difficult to put through comical hoops, and a particularly arduous performer in the service of the punster—the German word for pun, *Wortspiel*, is revealingly



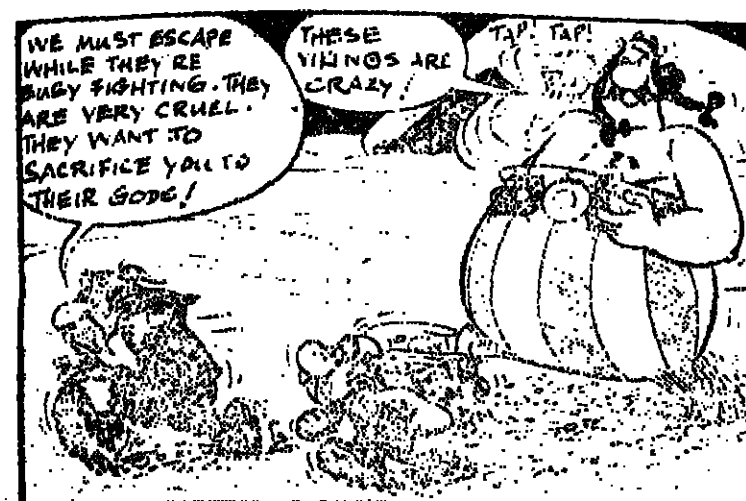
From Asterix and the Great Crossing (Hodder and Stoughton).

Stoll, whose initial outline of Asterix's admittedly tricky character he arranged itself rather skimpily round the traditional French notion of *raison*—though Asterix as Gallic travesty of Mercury is a useful thought—really enjoys himself with Obelix, whom he very plausibly links with the Gallic sun-god Belenos and his grandiose descendant, the Gargantua of Rabelais. (An illustration of Gargantua's son Pantagruel with a cow in each fist is the first of several examples of Doré's work used in evidence by Stoll; the tracing of strong connections between Uderzo's exuberance and the black-humorous tradition of Doré and Daumier is one of the major successes of the book.) In fact, the only disappointing moment in Stoll's presentation of Obelix comes when, pushing his reading of the character towards a familiar extreme, he identifies the mendicant Obelix professionally supplied as a giant phallic symbol. No symbol so frequently hurled by its custodian into the middle distance can afford to boast this most aggressive of the Freudian interpretations that suggest themselves.

Conditions prevailing inside and outside the Gaulish village (a nameless place, Stoll rightly points out, and therefore "serious" in a way that the surrounding Roman encampment like *Babiorum* cannot be) come in for an interpretation to which Stoll is continually adding reservations and extensions—and rightly so, for the comedy of Goscinny and Uderzo is one that demands flexibility from the reader, a willingness (which Stoll does not seem to expect to get from his German reader) to accept both sides of a paradox at once. At the very beginning of the saga an instructive example occurs where the defeated Vercingetorix (with whom

all other Gauls are identified through their ix-ending names) is seen throwing down his arms at, possibly on, the feet of the victorious Caesar. Verdingetorix is the Superman of this tableau as both his physique and the "rigid" angle of Uderzo's drawing makes plain; but where the canon history lessons which naturally emphasize the pride of the vanquished ancestor, is in showing Caesar, his master, as an inconsequential little figure of no personal prowess at all. And the effect of Caesar's weakness (remembered to some extent in later episodes) is to increase the reader's antipathy towards his imperial forces: an army that can flourish under the direction of such a runt, as the implication goes, must be an inhuman, mechanistic value. The pattern here is surely Germany in the Second World War, though Stoll is understandably reluctant to say so.

Later in the book, he will briefly point out—as he must—the invariable similarities between the Roman and German Occupations, but he saves his real critical energy for two more fanciful theories, namely that the Roman presence increasingly stands for all forms of imposed modernity, and in particular the homogenized one—now being imposed on Europe by the USA. Strange as it may seem, these notions do have something to them. The decadence of life in "progressive" Lutetia/Paris is certainly depicted with a provincial's eye in the big-city slurs; and in the over-ted, legionary to whom decadence is always catering, the GI lives up to a paradox at once. At the very beginning of the saga an instructive example occurs where the defeated Verdingetorix (with whom



Invited to go home, the basic impatience of the native Gauls is the same—and not at all unconnected with the subhorn Neo-politik of Charles de Gaulle during the period of Asterix's rise to fame. More extreme politics have been read into the epic, of course: the National Frontish ideals of Poujadism, and regional causes like Breton nationalism and the Corsican peasant movement have been strong contenders.

But the dottiness of behaviour among the Gaulish realists, which Goscinny has insisted on from the start, steers off the suggestion that he has some community ideal in mind. The only practicable utopian model that is kept before us—Stoll hints at this early on when he remarks that Asterix and Obelix are no ladies' men—is an ideal of male-companionship of a clubbable kind, that includes in its terms (according to a recent adventure, *The Great Crossing*, in which the pair play out their "national" characteristics in time to an audience of North American Indians) the necessity of rowdy arguments and fights, as well as bravery, "good living", enjoying a laugh, and the rest of it. The aim, by the way, is a demonstration for identification of Gauls purposes only; there is nothing evangelistic about it. The two friends, Asterix "ser pliffie Gnom" and "sein voluminöser Kumpan" (German can be irresistible), are happy so long as they can continue to enjoy their brotherly and symbiotic love, and have no desire to coopt strangers into the process, or indeed to punish fellow-countrymen who endanger it. The most convincing of all Stoll's chapters shows how Asterix *et le Chaudron*—unpublished, I think, in this country so far—shows the opportunity of visiting direct revenge upon the treacherous

swindler Morolastix, preferring to end the story on a note of possible reconciliation reminiscent of the *Prodigal Son*. If there is anything missing from Stoll's account—and there certainly too much of some things—it's the word *Kind*. The exercise of Stoll's talent for semantic excavation has thrown up a solid bank between himself and the audience whom Asterix most delights—the child. Nowhere is this clearer than in a sad last paragraph, in which Stoll seems to regret that the stories add up to a slightly fraudulent dream: that the sumptuousness of the comic heroes is no more than a symptom of their powerlessness, it seems to depress him that they are merely displaying the ability of all beleaguered powers to fancy their way out of their present subjugation, and into the realm of the gigantesque. "Gargantua-Obelix is a giant," he says "because he is already (nearly) defeated." This would have been the place for Stoll himself to fancy his way out of the library, and into the child's mind—where the conditions over which presides the village chief Abraracourcix (known to us, lucky as we are in our translators, as Vital) are so perfectly reproduced. It is the embattled children, facing as they do whole armies of adults with strange and preposterous jargons, who are the disguised heroes of this "Trivial" epic. He may miss the self-brimming national traits, and the playful anachronistic evocations of the modern industrial world with which Goscinny and Uderzo amuse themselves, their fellow adults, and the army scholar, but the child remains the book's best customer. We are surrounded, if only we know it, by little Gauls.

Russell Davies

Ghastly good taste

DOLF KOHNSTAMM:

Het bijzondere van het gewone
De kinderboekjes van Dick Bruna
Tijp. Amsterdam: Moeris.

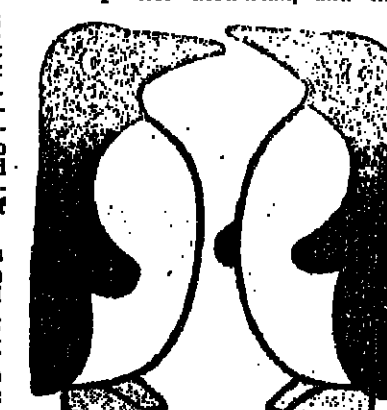
How does one say anything about children's books that is not vacuously bland? Only, it seems, by letting off steam in a childish display of prejudice. Before I follow the second option let me declare my position. I have lurked in the back-ground while my wife has brought up our four children to a point where they are beyond the reach of the kind of children's book I want to comment on here. I care about books in a generalized kind of way. And I care about painting and design more specifically. And I look through it may seem to those who love him, Dick Bruna's name had not properly penetrated my consciousness until I picked up Dolf Kohnstamm's brief essay on him.

I read Professor Kohnstamm's comments (in translation for the Dutch, I hasten to say, and looked through a number of Bruna's books. I realized as I did so that I had been aware of Bruna's work after all, but subliminally, rather in the way that one assimilates the music of a great composer, though, is in conspicuously good taste. It is economically drawn. And it is obviously well-suited to the three and four-year-olds who have enjoyed it in massive numbers. Professor Kohnstamm quotes figures for several countries, and they are remarkable: 3,257,097 Bruna books sold in Great Britain, 2,723,549 sold in Japan, 1,752,316 in Holland. In the face of such good taste and such sales there must be a strong presumptive case for believing that anyone who doesn't like Bruna must be a facet beast in favour of cold baths, and learning by rote.

But truth must be told. I do not like Bruna's books. My instinct on opening one, I found, was to close it again; even to remove it from the room. Why? Although eminently skilled, they strike me as empty; and as conducting a discreet flirtation with the twee. After a few voyages into the world of Bruna, I created it. I began to entertain an uncharacteristic desire for some gloomy Victorian eruption. For a Doré monster, who would devour Bruna's pastel-like figures by the handful. And I wish with the army scholar, but the child remains the book's best customer. We are surrounded, if only we know it, by little Gauls.

life to children as parents in their cheaper moments would like to pretend it is: wholesome, nice.

Professor Kohnstamm is a developmental psychologist with a special interest in books and television programmes for small children; and he touches on evidence that might help to explain the great success that Bruna has enjoyed. He points to the simplicity of Bruna's work. He points, in his clear, bright colours—referring as he does so to the precedent of the great Dutch painter Mondrian, and the



An illustration from Dick Bruna's *Animal Book* to be released by Eyre-Methuen on April 15.

designers of the De Stijl school, though for all the genuine similarity that I could detect, he might as well have enlisted that other Dutchman, Rembrandt. He reminds us of the reassuringly large baby-like heads Bruna employs; and the oval eyes, oval on end, as in Feynman's sentimental drawings of young love. But the most telling point Kohnstamm makes is Bruna's insistence on his characters facing straight out of the page, establishing direct eye-to-eye contact with the reader—as in the best television commercials. The frank eye-to-eye contact that sells stockings, and cigars, and motor cars, and signals trust.

Bruna is the son, the grandson and the great grandson of publishers; and A. W. Bruna is the family firm. It is evident that he knows in his bones how to sell books. The parallel drawn by Professor Kohnstamm with advertising is unwittingly apt. The books do not just express wholesomeness and good taste; they merchandise those qualities, and that is something rather different. Like successful commercials, the vision of the good life they portray is not being calculated with such studios, and studiously commercial, care.

Liam Hudson

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Those magnificent men A mole's skin

AIAN CHAMBERS:
Flyers and Flying
Kestrel, £3.75. (7226 5087 G)

This is a refreshing book. So much aviation literature nowadays, whether for adults or for the young, caters for those whose prime interest is in the machines rather than the aeronauts. But Aian Chambers has his own good idea of quelling the thirst for technical detail, and he does it by telling us how it was, and how it is, and how it will be. Each book takes a real family and shows how it is affected by historical events. The Shakespeares The Lawrences Each £2.50

One further minor criticism must be made, this time of detail in the text: the names of Sir Sefton Brancaster and the Vickers Vimy are misspelled, and the balloonist de Rozier is several times deprived of his "de". But in general the book is well produced, and it succeeds in its purpose, for it gives a convincing picture of the utter dedication, the courage and the tenacity of the pioneers of aviation.

Constance Babington Smith

Before the mast

FRANK KNIGHT:

The Golden Age of the Gallion
Collins, £3.75. (00 195290 0)

C. F. B. NAISH and HEATHER AMERY:
The Age of Sailing Ships
Usborne, £1.65. (86020 023 X)

These two interesting and unusually good books introduce different aspects of the story of the development and use of the wooden sailing ships which were one of the principal tools of western man in establishing his ascendancy over much of the rest of the world. This is a complex story, and the two books, though they are not written for the majority of human beings, are generally well written, and often very good. The two books are well illustrated, and the illustrations are of a high order of quality. The book by Frank Knight is a heavily illustrated book for children. There are minor points to argue with, but in both the text and the illustrations are excellent. Frank Knight's book is a very clear and simple account of the role played by the activities of the best-known seamen of the Elizabethan age. His text is closely related to the illustrations, which are mostly from contemporary material.

George Naish's book is about the best simple introduction to the history of the sailing ship and her world before the nineteenth century that I have yet seen. Again the illustrations are very well

KENNETH MELLANDY:
Talpa
Illustrated by Bert Kitchen
Collins, £2.75. (00 195504 7)

Kenneth Mellandy has spent so long thinking about moles that his biography reads as though Talpa were a personal acquaintance. The story is so meticulously accurate that it is difficult to fault. Every detail of the mole's activities is recorded with the sense of precision is heightened by the whole tale being tied to precise dates, almost like a diary.

The drawings are a little stylized, though usually not to the point of being seriously misleading. A representation of Talpa's burrow system is somewhat reminiscent of a railway marshalling yard, and all the animals are depicted with a fuzzy impression which is irritating.

Patrick Morris

Popular with the young, if not with fastidious parents, is the work of Richard Scarry, whose cutely dressed characters seem quite arbitrarily selected from different regions of the animal kingdom. A pig and a cat are the detectives in *Great Street Mystery*, which suffers from too long and complicated a plot. Scarry is at his best in simpler narratives, where the point of an episode is conveyed on a single page.

Animals as natural figures in Judy Brook's *Tim Mouse Visits the Farm*. Tim, looking for milk with his longish legs, is accidentally frightened by a cow into a frenzied gallop through the village and all over an idyllic watercolour landscape. As always with this artist, the illustrations are full of movement and observed detail.

Robert Kraus's *Leo the Late Bloomer* takes an interesting subject: the story of Leo, who couldn't do anything right and whose disappointed father stopped watching him and watched television instead. This may well strike a painfully familiar note with some children, though they should be assured by Leo's final success. But the impact of the text is dissipated by the drawings. A shapeless tiger is in a field, in snow or playing with an owl, crocodile and an elephant. Whereas Scarry's oddily

Basil Greenhill

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Longman

Available and expendable

As book prices soar, paperback picture-books remain very good value for the child buyer; pre-school children in particular are especially well served. Eric Carle's *The Very Hungry Caterpillar*, munching his way through a selection of fruit, makes neat round holes in the pages that appeal greatly to small fingers. Numbers and days of the week are introduced incidentally. Then the caterpillar goes wild, eating through chocolate cake, ice-cream, lollipop and cherry pie, but recovers himself sufficiently to eat a nice green leaf and spin a cocoon. Childish greed and the life cycle of the butterfly are inconspicuously but charmingly mixed.

More sober, but just as successful with the youngest listeners, is Heather Melville's *Mothers*, which is a collection of simple and cheerful and the line of text beneath is pleasantly rhymed, making it easy to say or remember, while the subject of holidays—the seaside, picnics, the zoo—is a perennial favourite.

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Cheap thrills

GEOFFREY PALMER and
JOEL LLOYD:
Ghosts Go Haunting
Illustrated by Sara Silcock
Pica, 40p. (330 24560 0)

MARY DANBY (Editor):
The Eighth Armada Ghost Book
Illustrated by Peter Archer
Collins Armada, 40p. (00 68142 0)

Whatever your age, there are three linked things you need in a ghost story: that it should be chilling, that it should be chilling, and that it should be chilling. It is said that the stories in *Ghosts Go Haunting* are so good that they need no introduction. They are based on old written records, from auto-biographies to folklores to carefully dated ancient magazine and newspaper reports, as the editors note at the end of the book. This fallacy arises partly because the editors have so plainly been written up to date, and partly because they all belong to the past, particularly to the eighteenth century, which gives them a fancy

chosen animals are always dressed and behave like people. These creatures have no such rationale. The serious subject of late development deserves better treatment. Like violence and temper tantrums, it can be comforting to read about, for by depicting anxieties, books help to bring them back within the child's imaginative control. No writer has perceived this more brilliantly than Maurice Sendak in *Where the Wild Things Are*, and he has done it so effectively again, a different formula must be found. Unfortunately, *Boy, Was I Mad!* fails to do so. The text by Kathryn Hittie exchanges Sendak's admirable brevity for the profit and self-consciously gloomy tones of Kay Thompson's *Eloise*, while Mercer Mayer's drawings reveal his admiration for the master by a slavish imitation.

Visual originality characterizes the next two books. William Lapkin's *Nubber Bear* is a sustained by factual observations from insatiable curiosity and that legendary passion for honey that so frequently leads to disaster. The real impact of Nubber's nocturnal quest, however, derives from Roger Duvoisin's illustrations. Using a limited colour range—bright blue, yellow ochre and dark green—he combines effects of mass with scrappy details of plant and animal life in a highly atmospheric but quite unthreatening night adventure. By contrast, Quentin Blake's *Lester at the Seaside* takes place in bright sunlight. Lester and his friends Otto and flap-eared Lorna are wildly eccentric-looking monsters with quite conventional tastes, and their day out combines the ordinary pleasures of sea and sand with the

ERIC CARLE: *The Very Hungry Caterpillar*. Puffin, 60p. (14 050 087 1)
HEATHER MELVILLE: *Mothers*. Puffin, 45p. (14 050 09 0)

RICHARD SCARRY: *Great Street Mystery*. Collins Picture Lions, 50p. (00 680862 0)

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JOHN HULBERT: *All About Navigating and Route Finding*. Carousal, 35p. (552 54065 X)

After an opening chapter assuring us that "Navigation is Easy", the author proceeds in logical sequence to deal with the various navigational procedures, so that anyone who has mastered the contents could turn well prepared to stand up on the subject. Plenty of amateur navigating adults will find the book useful for revision.

Compass, dead reckoning, tides, fixes, appear in turn, followed, reasonably enough in the conditions of today, by chapter "Radio and Radar Navigation", before proceeding to the stars. Perhaps a mention might have been made of the hyperbolic systems, these being the guide for so many modern ships, however conscientiously star and sun sights may be taken.

A chapter on "How the Ancients Found Their Way" gives perspective to the subject, and one on "Reading a Map" carries it beyond the nautical range. There are thirty-one clear diagrams and a number of less clear half-tones. A glossary, a list of further reading, answers to the questions at the end of each chapter and an index complete a book which offers a good means of general education, in addition to its primary concern, and at a commendably low price.

author's own brand of dirty invention. These stories appeal to a surprisingly large age range. The confident freedom that characterizes Quentin Blake's text and drawings creates an effect of consistent, if illogical, comic fantasy which looks easy to achieve, but is fraught with pitfalls for an inexperienced writer.

Sarah Garland's first book, *Rose and Her Bath*, exemplifies some of these difficulties. The idea of a flying bath is a good one and its disgruntled tone of voice is amusing, but after a promising opening, inspiration flags. The author is particularly ill-served by her own wobbly and unprofessional drawings; greater realism might have lent a surreal conviction to this dream-like tale.

Paul Jennings in *The Great Jelly of London* shows how important consistency of tone and apparent seriousness are in comic fantasy. The inspired notion of using the Albert Hall as a gigantic jelly mould is sustained by factual observations about the borough of Kensington, how insurance works and what to do when someone is in a state of shock. It is good to have this old favourite available in paperback.

Finally, two traditional tales with new illustrations: Joanna Troughton's pictures for her own version of *Sir Gawain and the Loathly Damsel* are heavily outlined in black, suggesting stained glass, but are fluent and pleasantly coloured. Errol Le Cain's *Cinderella* is highly stylized but his line is often rigid and insensitive so that the black-and-white pages disappoint, though his sense of colour is impeccable.

Julia Briggs

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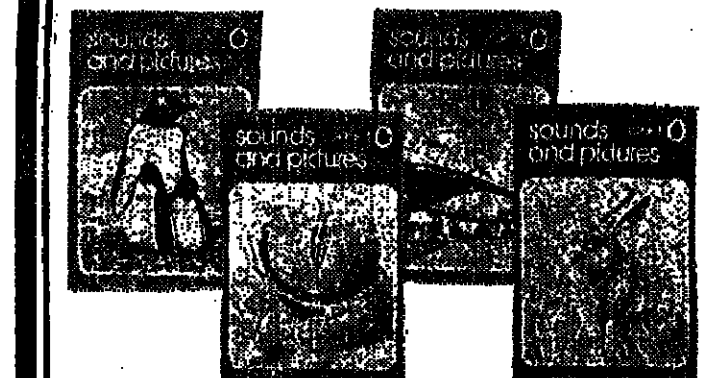
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Douglas Phillips-Burt

To the Editor

'The Young Romantics'

Sir—In her review of my book *The Young Romantics* (March 26) Joanna Richardson writes: "Occasionally she makes an error. (Saint-Beuve had a medical not a scientific training)." In fact Saint-Beuve is introduced as a medical student in the third sentence of the book and two further references are made to his medical studies. I used the term "scientific training" later on and only in a general sense.

She also writes: "Perhaps she dwells too long with George Sand's relationship with Marie Dorval. An angry comment by Vigny and a paragraph in Arsène Houssaye's *Confessions* (so often fictional) are no evidence of a lesbian attachment." This may be so and I drew no firm conclusion. However, in her own book, *The Bohemians* (page 40), Miss Richardson writes of George Sand: "Her lovers were legion (Marie Dorval, the actress, was among them)." LINDA KELLY.

44 Ladbroke Grove, London W11 2PA.

'Dissent in the USSR'

Sir—I hope this letter may end the public correspondence with George Felfor, which can be of little interest to your readers. I am sorry that the relevant point in my review (as long ago as December 26) has been lost in the tangle of arguments, namely the fairly obvious one that the academic and the journalistic kinds of writing on the Soviet Union are each prone to particular merits and weaknesses. There are two points in Mr Felfor's letter of March 19 I ought to touch on. He complains that my "entire analysis of the USSR is based on the case, because his essay in the symposium occupied only a small portion of the review; there were twelve other authors, all discussed individually. Secondly, I was not confusing him with another man, as he oddly alleges—apparently on the grounds that I referred to his first book (*Justice in Moscow*, 1964) as an academic out-cow (which it was regarded as at the time, and still is—except, evidently, by its author). JACK MILLER.

2 Doune Quadrant, Glasgow G20 6DN.

A Kind of Resistance

Sir—Permit me to reply briefly to F. L. Carson's letter (March 12) about my review of the *Walden* papers (February 27). It is true that "most of those who resisted [Hitler] did so, indeed had to do so, from within the establishment." I was above all pointing to the problems of resistance within the frame of a totalitarian regime like the one in Nazi Germany. In doing so I have neither "accepted uncritically the legend current within the present West German establishment that the only resistance worth mentioning was that leading to the plot of July 20, 1944," nor have I meant to slight the role of the working-class element which Professor Carson claims, constituted

In the Spectator

this week
SPRING BOOKS

H. J. Eysenck
on Roazen's Freud
Al Capp
on Kennedy's conversations
Gina Mandling
on Byron's letters
Humphrey Trevelyan/Dee
Wells/Elspeth Huxley
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"the vast majority of resistors". No doubt many communists and socialists languished in concentration camps, but my research in the field informs me that the resistance which succeeded on the national level was in fact resistance from within the establishment.

I do not see on what evidence Professor Carson bases his statement to the contrary. The *Rote Kapelle* was an intelligence service rather than a resistance group. One can, however, as yet insufficiently explored by historians, is the local sector which might yield more information on the part played in the Resistance by the working class.

KLEMENS von KLEMPERER.
Department of History, Smith College, Northampton, Massachusetts 01060.

'Exploring Mysticism'

Sir—I am not surprised that Stephen Clark (January 30) is profoundly disappointed by my book *Exploring Mysticism*. He seeks a guide, or at least a companion on the way. I have offered nothing but a discussion of maps, roads and means of transportation. But Mr Clark might be disappointed even more if some of his assumptions turned out to be false. I do not say they are; but in my essay I have made no such assumptions. Mr Clark writes as if he had some specific knowledge of the reality which he claims the mystics have confronted. I have argued that such matters can be meaningfully and perhaps conclusively explored only at a later stage, when a great deal of preliminary work has first been done. Mr Clark also assumes that all mystics "must end by realizing that Power, the wholly Other, the Unnamed, may be along manipulating them." This is a claim which is an arbitrary and unjustified assumption. Mr Clark's "Buddhists do not make such assumptions, and neither do I. To make such assumptions when we are studying mysticism is an area in which we cannot answer even the most basic questions, is bad method to say the least. Mr Clark however is not concerned with method, and his review does at least show that he has the faintest notion of what he is talking about: viz. explore how mysticism can be rationally studied.

Apart from shunning the main issue, Mr Clark reads carelessly and without reflection. He complains that I have not delimited definition, where I argued that a definition of this kind must be premature. He also finds my use of "rationality" unsatisfactory. I have discussed this in contexts which are central to my understanding. Mr Clark picks out two which are peripheral—Christian miracles and the American war in Vietnam—claiming that neither phenomenon displays any self-contradiction. They do not display contradiction, but they display contradiction. Miracles contradict by definition what at any given time are assumed to be laws of nature. And, if supporting a country by displaying it does not count as a display of contradiction, I do not know what does.

Mr Clark invests me with a preference for easy methods which I am sufficiently busy not to despise. He also writes that my "entire analysis of the USSR is based on the case, because his essay in the symposium occupied only a small portion of the review; there were twelve other authors, all discussed individually. Secondly, I was not confusing him with another man, as he oddly alleges—apparently on the grounds that I referred to his first book (*Justice in Moscow*, 1964) as an academic out-cow (which it was regarded as at the time, and still is—except, evidently, by its author). JACK MILLER.

2 Doune Quadrant, Glasgow G20 6DN.

Let Stephen Clark dream about wandering along the paths of his fancy. He need not be upset, unless it is about misrepresenting those others who try to make sense of paths, wanderings, dreams and fancies alike.

FRITS STAAL.
Department of Philosophy and Social Studies, University of California, Berkeley, California 94720.

'A Year's Letters'

Sir—I should like to thank your reviewer for her sympathetic comments on Swinburne's *A Year's Letters* (March 12). May I also beg your indulgence in allowing me to correct some errors and omissions that have come to light since the book was issued?

On page xii, there is mention made of Admiral Swinburne's house at Bonchurch, "which has since become a convent." It was a convent from 1904 to 1949; since 1949 it has been owned and operated as a resort by World Travel Associates Ltd, or "Galleon". Their address (for readers English or American) who might wish to take a holiday in the rooms where Swinburne "played as a boy"—as the English guides say—is 77-87 King Street, Maidstone, Kent ME14 1EG. (I owe this information to John S. Mayfield.)

On page xiii, it should be added that the leaf from the Mayfield collection which contains text pertaining to *A Year's Letters* and "Laus Veneris" also contains three lines from "The Leper".

On page 167 it should be noted that there is no direction in the transcript to delete the dedication "To My Husband", which is lacking in the published text of 1877. On page 170 the note beginning "page 23, 1. 28" should begin "page 23, 1. 28" page 24, 1. 15; Well. You see... with a dreadful unclarity." etc.

On page 181, insert the note: Page 30, 1. 1; osteology: Ernest Radworth may have been modelled to some degree upon Walter Trevelyan. See Lafontade, *Le Journal*, 1. 106; and below the note to page 69, 1. 2.

On page 182 insert the note: Page 35, 1. 4; exigence: thus in Swinburne's manuscript instead of the usual exigence.

On page 184 insert the note: Page 46, 1. 17; exordit: thus in Swinburne's manuscript instead of the usual exordit.

F. J. SYMPHER.

1675 York Avenue, New York, NY 10028.

John Harrison

Sir—Once again the true facts surrounding the story of John Harrison (1693-1783) and his quest for recognition with the Commissioners of the Board of Longitude have failed to be untangled. Francis Watson in his otherwise most excellent and erudite review (February 13) of the *Art of Longitude* by George Dalrymple has failed to present the facts correctly. Eric Whitte in his efforts to put the facts straight (Letters, March 5) has also managed to perpetuate the popular inaccuracies surrounding this subject.

John Harrison started his pioneering work on the marine timekeeper around 1730 at his home in Barrow on Humber, Lincolnshire. On completion, this first timekeeper was tested at Parliament after which Harrison received the sum of £500 from the Commissioners of the Board of Longitude to produce a second and improved machine. Between this period and October 1761 Harrison received money from the board totalling some £4,000. This money was provided to enable Harrison to develop his ideas which, finally, he did in 1759, when he produced what has now become the most famous watch in the world.

After two of the most successful trials possible of this watch which easily qualified for the £20,000 award, Harrison eventually obtained £10,000 from the Board of Longitude. He never received any further reward whatever from this source. However, after protracted efforts which finally culminated in a successful appeal to George III, Harrison received a further £2,750 from Parliament under a completely different Act—13 George III c. 77. Harrison was treated very badly by the Board of Longitude but the reasons for this are not relevant here.

It is essential to point out that the romantic story surrounding Harrison and his struggle for justice is recognized for his successful efforts to produce a method of measuring longitude as required by the Act of 12 Queen Anne 1714, completely shrouds the real technical importance of this eighteenth-century scientist.

It is also interesting to note that this is the bicentenary anniversary of the death of John Harrison, whose equally important work was concerned with the development of the precision pendulum clock through the most incredibly painstaking and laborious process of experiments.

The fact that he was able to go beyond the principle of the pendulum to develop a timepiece of remarkable accuracy which overcame the inherent difficulties associated with precision timekeeping on board a ship at sea, e.g. pitching and rolling and wide variations in temperature and barometric pressure, was outstanding and had defeated such scientists of the calibre of Christiaan Huygens.

Whereas Breguet was undoubtedly the most brilliant maker of deadweight complex machines, it was Harrison who paved the way for all the other makers by inventing and testing and proving the scientific principles on which mechanical timekeeping was based and later developed.

ANDREW L. KING.
Tyrell Timekeepers, Burnhill Road, Beckenham, Kent.

The History of Education

Sir—E. G. West's letter (January 16, 1976) contains a good example of the misuse of educational statistics. If, as Professor West contends, the average age of marriage in the latter part of the nineteenth century was twenty-eight years, then the average school-leaving age up until the early 1870s was around ten years, then it by no means follows that figures of literacy for those married in 1871, 1881 and 1891 "refer to a schooling that ended in 1854, 1864 and 1884 at the latest." Surely approximately half of those married in those years were younger than the average, and surely a similar proportion must have remained in school beyond the average term. Thus it is possible, and indeed probable, that Harold Silver is right in contending that the improved literacy of those married in the latter years can be attributed in part to Foster's new board schools.

PAUL L. ROBERTSON.
Department of Economic History, University of Melbourne, Parkville, Victoria 3052, Australia.

Drummond Allison

Sir—I am preparing a new edition of the poems of Drummond Allison (1921-1943). I would appreciate any information from your readers as to the *Art of Longitude* by George Dalrymple, which was not published in *The Yellow Night* (1944) or *Poetry at Oxford in War-time* (1945). I am also keen to locate a suitable photograph of Allison to include in the edition.

MICHAEL STUART.
60 Abbey Drive, Glasgow G14 9JP.

Around this week's contributors

ERIC ADAMS is the author of *Francis Danby*, 1973.
QUENTIN ANDERSON's books include *The American Henry James*, 1958.
B. C. BLOOMFIELD is co-author of *W. H. Auden: A Bibliography*, 1924-1969, 1973.
G. P. BUTLER is Professor of German at the University of Bath.
A. G. DICKENS's most recent book is *The German Nation and Martin Luther*, 1974.
WILLIAM FLETCHER's *The Art of John Milton* was published last year.
J. F. C. HARRISON's books include *The Early Victorians*, 1832-1851, 1971.
FRANCIS HASKELL's *Rediscoveries in Art* was published earlier this year.
MATTHEW HODGART's books include *Satire*, 1969.
MARY JACKSON is a Fellow of Lady Margaret Hall, Oxford.
HENRY JAMES is the author of *War of Succession in Spain, 1700-15*, 1969.
ERIC KORN is an antiquarian book-seller.
WILLIAM JACOBSON is Director of the Institute of Contemporary History and Wilson Library, London.
WILLIAM MCGEE is Professor of History at Mount Holyoke College, Massachusetts.
BRYAN MARTIN is the author of *Forthcoming Book by John Reble*.

St Dominic's Press

Sir—The William Canton Centenary Year is also the year since the late H. D. C. set up his printing office, equipped with a 100-year-old Stanbury handpress, in a disused stable at Ditchling. The St Dominic's Press as it was subsequently named, was one of the most interesting of private presses of this century. Its work was greatly aided by Stanley Morison and other great judges; but its books, brought together in a comprehensive exhibition.

Such an exhibition is to be held in the library of The National Book League, in Abchurch Lane, London, E.C. 4, on August 14. The St Dominic's Press books were used in small editions, usually of between 250 and 500 copies, and are not hard to come by, especially since, in recent years many collections have been dispersed.

May I ask those of your readers who possess St Dominic's books, and who would be willing to lend them for the exhibition, and a possible "preview" at the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge, kindly to get in touch with me as soon as possible?

BROCARD SEWELL.
Whitefriars School, Chelmsford, Kings, Cheltenham GL52 6NT.

'The Writing on the Wall'

Sir—Your report on Roger Perry's *The Writing on the Wall* (Commentary, February 27) secondly unnecessarily puzzled by the graffiti "Remember the Truitt Demist" was the title of a play by Heathcote Williams which was performed at the Theatre Upstairs, The Royal Court Theatre, during January 1975. Two songs from *Remember the Truitt Demist* were included in the album *Além*, which co-edited with Peter Burg and Ken Edwards in August 1975.

ROBERT HAMPTON.
6 Avenue Road, London N6.

The Date of a Doorway

Sir—In your issue of March 12 the caption you used for the two doorways reproduced from my book, *The Architectural Imagination*, of History, suggests that the two doorways are of different centuries. In the book my caption states clearly that one only dates from the late fifteenth century, the Tallanate design by Robert Smythson at Wollaton Hall is dated 1580-88.

JOHN GLOAG.
3 The Mall, East Sheen, London SW14 7EN.

Here be dragons

By Eric Korn



Griffin in a triumphal procession, from Fabulous Beasts and Demons.

HEINZ MODE:
Fabulous Beasts and Demons
280pp. Phaidon, £9.95.

Think of a monster. Ask a friend to describe one. Ten to one it will end wings of that, a griffin never so intimate that the origin of the parts becomes indistinct—or a cyclops or hydra, a creature formed by the multiplication or abscission of members. The imagination like the gene complex, works mostly by reduplication and recombination; mutation is uncommon and generally uninvited. Flog your imagination into producing something more remote, like a nostril-eating viscous triangle: it is still only a mosaic of known attributes. If your fancy breeds something truly unfamiliar, a sum or glitch, there are no words to describe it.

There are no kums or glitches in Heinz Mode's book: the hunting of them is a relatively new and sophisticated exercise—they have no his-tory. The largest question raised (but not discussed) in the essay is often difficult to privilege: impossibilities—whether monsters without ancestors do not occur because they are barred by epistemological ground rules, or whether perhaps the fabrication of monsters served a necessary and need is not the creation of novel-ties but of anomalies. Is a monster essentially a licensed trespasser, its role to ward off, disarm or force the perilous taboo against breaking categories by making of it god or shock or jest?

A second and related puzzle, easily lost sight of in the dragon-haunted thickets of this enchanted game preserve, is that monsters are remarkable not for their variety but for their monotony: the seeming multiplicity of fantasy is reducible to a handful of recurring types. In the preface to *The Book of Imaginary Beings*, Borges says:

Let us pass now from the zoo of reality to the zoo of mythologies, to the zoo whose denizens are not like but sphinxes and griffins and centaurs. The population of this second zoo should exceed by far the population of the first, since a monster is no more than a combination of parts of real beings, and the possibilities of combination of fantasy is reducible to an endless variety of monsters—combinations of fishes, birds and reptiles, limited only by our own boredom or disgust. This however does not happen; our monsters would be alliborn, like God. The zoology of dreams is far poorer than the zoology of the Maker.

This debatable land has been explored before, with many different objectives: from prophetic exegesis of Behemoth or the beast of the Apocalypse, whose each horn stands for an epoch, a tyrant, or an act of Parliament; to materialist fantasies like Willy Ley's impressively convincing demonstration (in *The Longship and the Unicorn*) that the confused representation of a surviving Ignorandum, Professor Mode's term for references, are restricting; not the genesis and purpose of monster or demon, but largely the evolution, taxonomy, and geography of their images (though there is nothing restricted about the provenance of his superb illustrations, which run from Mohenjo-Daro to Chagall, from Gessner to Grandville). He omits psychoanalytic interpretations, though many demons are interestingly phallic; he ignores, fortu-

HITLER

Available
Hitler: The Führer & the People, J. P. Stern, £6.50
An excellent book!
Douglas Johnson, New Society.

Three passions—insects, flying and photography—have been the inspiration of this interesting and unusual book. But it is really an almost fanatical devotion to the last that has produced it. Expert knowledge of the minutiae of insect life, not to be blunted by technical difficulties have enabled Stephen Dalton to photograph insects in his efforts is a series of seventy

nately, extraterrestrial BEBs; he puts aside the monsters of America, Oceania and much of Africa, because they are for the most part ill defined and too much like the real world. But he serves to define a border rather than transgress it. Cerberus and jackal-headed Anubis were gatekeepers; and Maxwell's demon inspects the vistas of molecules in an ideal gas, and separates the sheep from the goats. Children likewise seem to need jabberwockies and pushmi-pullys to help them learn the boundaries of the natural order.

The distinction seems difficult and unenviable. A man filled with the mane of a leopard and wearing a leopard skin must pass very easily into a composite; conversely, it is always moot whether an ancient image represents fancy or fancy dress. But Mode argues, strikingly, that monsters were not created originally by the so-called primitives. Peoples, as one might have expected, but are in fact to a large extent the product of highly developed civilizations. . . . In Stone-Age representations the natural form is clearly recognizable, but as the modernizing process of contemporary man, when he saw them, associated them with powers, unrecognizable to us, which in their natural shapes were nevertheless supernatural, incomprehensible, and therefore he indicated by signs that he wished to be returned to the sea or to the land. As the boundaries between fish and mammal became more certain, these creatures evaporated like Cheesheer cats. At the same time sailors began to start in mortal and while every land voyage, by fabrication, "fairy Hanovers", with scraps of monkey and skate and good stout bread.

Nor does he discuss "physiological monsters", real or fantasized monstrous births, though these were ever associated with monsters and chimeras, being frequently described as "children of the earth" or "children of the sea". In Christian times, especially, were admiral, either the emblematic punishment of their erring parents, or presages of national disaster. Obviously, the "children of the earth" is something to do with horniness. Professor Mode proves that at least in origin the unicorn was not a distorted rhinoceros; goats from the Indian Valley represent both quite distinctly. But he denies us an in-

Winging their way

By G. E. J. Nixon

STEPHEN DALTON:
Borne on the Wind
The Extraordinary World of Insects in Flight
Edited by John Kings
159pp. Chatto and Windus, £5.

Three passions—insects, flying and photography—have been the inspiration of this interesting and unusual book. But it is really an almost fanatical devotion to the last that has produced it. Expert knowledge of the minutiae of insect life, not to be blunted by technical difficulties have enabled Stephen Dalton to photograph insects in his efforts is a series of seventy

interesting part of the story, for the unicorn, the least unlikely of all fabulous monsters, took its place firmly in rational zoology for a while. The credulous Topsell (*The Historie of Four-Footed Beastes*, 1607) writes impatiently:

"the vulgar sort of infidel people, which scarcely believe any hearbe but such as they see in their own garden, or any beast but such as is in their own flocks, or any knowledge but such as is bred in their own brains, or any birds which are not hatched in their own Nests . . . of the true Unicorn, whereof there were more proofes in the world, because of the nobleness of his horn, they have ever bin in doubt: by which distraction it appeareth, with me that there is some secret enemy in the inward degenerate nature of man, which continually blindeth the eyes of God his people, from beholding and leaving the greatness of God his workes."

To Topsell the diversity of the accounts implies several distinct species, whereas to Sir Thomas Browne (*Pseudodoxia Epidemica*) they cast doubt on the whole. Since therefore there be many Unicorns; since they are we appropriate a horn is so variously described . . . since if they were true horses, yet might their virtues be questioned; since though we allow some virtues, yet were others not to be received; with what security a man may rely on this remedy, the mistress of fools hath already instructed in some, and to wisdom (which is never too late to learn) it is not too late to consider.

The form of the European unicorn (as seen, for example, in *La Chasse au Licorne*) is influenced by the "unicorn's horn" which was never too late to learn) it is not too late to consider. The form of the European unicorn (as seen, for example, in *La Chasse au Licorne*) is influenced by the "unicorn's horn" which was never too late to learn) it is not too late to consider. The form of the European unicorn (as seen, for example, in *La Chasse au Licorne*) is influenced by the "unicorn's horn" which was never too late to learn) it is not too late to consider.

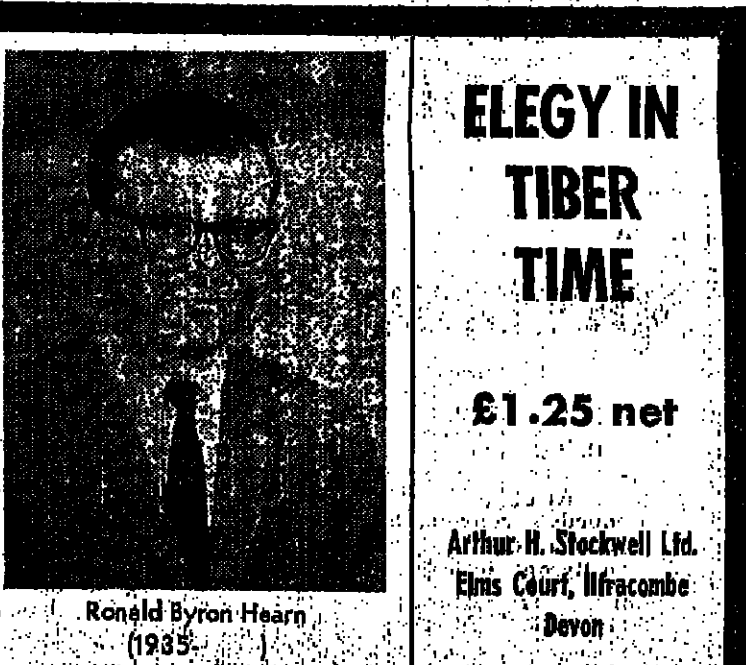
Most readers, however, will consult this book not for the resolution of problems, but to delight in the splendid, diverse, and intoxicating (in the best sense) of the diverse representations of centaurs, sphinxes, and the mermaid-melusine and other creatures of the imagination. The Chinese mythical figure, the Qilin, is a seven-headed beast across a Lincos plate, with a horned Chinese demon, is quite revealing (in the case of the demon, probably literally). The pictures are numerous; but it is part of the charm—they are not always closely related to the text (some of the most interesting ones decorate the bibliography), nor are the captions always adequate. One reads, in its entirety: "Winged Deity with animals. Louvre, Paris." But I cannot refrain from a work which introduces me to the world of the imagination, and which is so full of the spirit of the age.

Most of us have a soft spot for unicorns, and will be gratified to learn of varieties from Harappa and of descriptions from the *Shih-chi* of Gilead. Professor Mode wisely ignores Freudian interpretations, but when we learn that unicorns are tamed according to some versions by virgins and to others by harlots, and of descriptions from the *Shih-chi* of Gilead, we are reminded that the common factor is something to do with horniness. Professor Mode proves that at least in origin the unicorn was not a distorted rhinoceros; goats from the Indian Valley represent both quite distinctly. But he denies us an in-

ELEGY IN TIBER TIME

£1.25 net

Arthur H. Stockwell Ltd.
Elms Court, Ilfracombe
Devon



A foreign affair

By Blair Worden

CHARLES P. KORR:
Cromwell and the New Model
Foreign Policy. Foreign Policy
England's Policy Toward France,
1649-1658.
268pp. University of California
Press, £6.85.

"The Wars start at Calais", begins Charles P. Korr, "was a crude, but direct, nineteenth-century statement of Englishmen's ignorance and distrust of their cross-Channel neighbors." Perhaps Dr Korr possesses unalloyed evidence of what he calls "political ottomanism", but I cannot find that any foreigners, let alone cross-Channel neighbors, were called wogs in the nineteenth century. However, there are aspects of *Cromwell and the New Model Foreign Policy* which stand in more pressing need of explanation than its opening sentence.

If the title raises hopes of a long overdue reassessment of Cromwell's diplomacy, Dr Korr is quick to dispel them. First, the "focal point"—that is, the almost exclusive concern—of his book is "the evolution of Cromwell's policy toward France", an unexplained choice which seems purely arbitrary until one realizes that France was the only country whose representatives in England wrote in a language Dr Korr can read. Secondly, he asks to regard his study "as a study into the foreign policy of England, not as a work of diplomatic history or of the even broader subject of international politics". Having contended, by means of these subtle (not to say invisible) distinctions, to set his crusade at the lowest imaginable level, Dr Korr spectacularly fails to clear it.

The most elementary questions concerning the "evolution" of foreign policy escape him. We least among the world's historians, we know that the policy of Cromwell's England was not a ready-made view of the world, but a hard to see what Dr Korr means by "the New Model foreign policy", since nothing he writes indicates that the New Model had a foreign policy. The relationship between government policy and commercial interests is virtually ignored; not a single trading company, not a single prominent merchant or financier, appears in Dr Korr's underpopulated index. Other omissions include the republicans, Harrington, Milton, Heselrige, Scot, Neville, Chaloner—who contributed to the debate in the 1650s about the use to which England's new military and naval resources should be put. Ideas like economic might as well not have existed. All we are offered is a dry and seemingly interminable narrative, containing nothing that is both new and significant in Anglo-French diplomatic relations and exchanges.

When Dr Korr does attempt to put flesh on his presentation, the results are so soggy that one momentarily suspects him of skillful parody. Cromwell himself had a "deeply Calvinistic view of fate" and enacted "a role" of "the broader stage of his God's world" yet "the way in which he implemented his policies was based on his own situation." "The measures he took toward the outside world were not divorced from his feelings on religion, his sense of duty, his view of the state, or his sense of the conditions that arose during the turbulent decades of the 1640s and 1650s." There is John Thurloe, "the diligent, hard-working, businesslike 'one of Cromwell's closest confidants' who achieved 'a unique meeting of minds' with the Protector; the two men held intelligence reports 'in a critical, not and failed to integrate them."

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into the world of events that they already knew to be true". Or there is the ambassador, Sir William Lockhart, who "had lived a hectic and eventful life. The choice of a second wife in 1651, Robina, a niece of Cromwell's by her mother, did nothing to harm Lockhart's prospects."

One need not expect Dr Korr to accept the conclusions of recent studies which bear on his subject—essays by Robert Brenner, J. P. Cooper and J. E. Farnell, for example—but one might expect him to show signs of having read them. If he had consulted von Bischoffhausen's pioneering book on Cromwellian policy, he would have found appendices (in English) which would have spared him most of his notes. On the theme of Anglo-French relations—the subject Dr Korr so narrowly and so heavily circumscribes—the includes in his bibliography, but not in his text, an unpublished dissertation by H. J. Smith, a work infinitely superior to Dr Korr's. Other unpublished work, on the other hand, is quoted with relief. Dr Korr solemnly records his disapproval of insignificant points in unhelpful American theses, and we are even assured that we need not "agree entirely" with a long and pointless quotation from a manuscript memoir on English diplomacy, drawn up in 1820. These diminutive refinements of historical perspective are no compensation for the absence of anything that can be identified as a clear argument or a coherent interpretation.

The University of California Press having made its mysterious decision to publish the book, might at least have insisted on a basic standard of proofreading and grammatical accuracy. It is hard to say whether the misprints or the author's own solecisms are the more numerous, especially when "imperfectly" appears as an adjective. Even in an age of collapsing literacy there must be sub-editors who can detect such errors as "Unlike Cromwell's other actions, much of his policy was based on a 'monopoly on civil disorders in the 1640s'." How can the Western Design have been "conceived as an 'unplanned disease'?" The book ends, as it begins, on a note of flaccid catastrophe. "If the final sentence means anything, it requires us to believe either that Cromwell was in fact laying a conscience that was both English and religious, or that both the Englishness and the religiousness of Cromwell's conscience were unique."

Wide open spaces

By G. R. Elton

GERALD A. J. HODGETT:
Tudor Lincolnshire
Volume 6: History of Lincolnshire
212pp. History of Lincolnshire
Society, £1.50.

Few counties have attracted as much serious historical study as Lincolnshire, and much of it has been done in the twentieth century. Its Record Society's publications are a model of profitable zeal, and the enterprise of which *Tudor Lincolnshire* forms a part, has been a continuing inspiration. G. A. J. Hodgett has therefore been able to draw on a fine array of good work. Joan Thirkon on agriculture, Dorothy Owen on the Church, Margaret Boulton on the clergy, E. J. H. Jones on the 1536 rising, not to mention his own early work on the fate of monks and nuns. The result is a quiet, sober, reasonably comprehensive survey, though without either surprise or excitement. Lincolnshire was then, as it remains, a predominantly agrarian region, and perhaps such areas do not often produce very exciting history. Mr

Reluctant reformer

By Jasper Ridley

NORMAN GASHT:
Peel
320 pp. Longman, £6.95.

Norman Gasht's two-volume biography of Sir Robert Peel—*Mr Secretary Peel*, published in 1961, and *Sir Robert Peel* in 1972—has been widely acclaimed as one of the outstanding political biographies. His new book, *Peel*, is a shortened version, in one volume. It is only a little more than a quarter of the length of the two-volume work. Obviously, a good deal has been lost in this process. As the original book was almost universally praised, and no one suggested that it was unnecessarily verbose, this means that over 70 per cent of a great biography has been discarded. The statement by the publishers on the jacket that although "the wealth of material contained in the first version was indispensable for the scholar, there has been a growing demand for a more concise and manageable version for other readers" is not a satisfactory explanation. It is the "other readers", the non-scholars, who will suffer most from the omission of the background material and the longer explanations which Professor Gasht has now had to sacrifice. Shorter books are often more difficult to read than longer ones; if the same amount of information has to be compressed into fewer pages, it has to be served up in a heavier and more concentrated form.

Peel is therefore a less satisfactory book than *Mr Secretary Peel* and *Sir Robert Peel*, but it is nevertheless an excellent one-volume biography, and probably the best book that it is possible to write about Peel in 160,000 words. Professor Gasht has accomplished the painful task of shortening his masterpiece with as great a skill as he showed in writing the original book. He has achieved this in the only way in which it could have been done satisfactorily—by rewriting the book; and the new book is sufficiently different from the old to make it well worth while for those who have studied the two-volume biography to read this one as well.

British society changed more during Peel's lifetime than in any other period of sixty years. Peel writes Professor Gasht, "but in 1788, the world of Gibbon and Johnson, Reynolds, and stage-coaches, highwaymen and the judicial burning of women, died in 1850 in the age of Faraday and Darwin, of Punch, railway excursion, and the use of the steam engine." Peel played a leading part in the events of these years, and many students of politics consider

him to be the greatest statesman of the period. But his personality is one of the least vivid and most neutral of all the nineteenth-century British Prime Ministers. He had none of the cold rigidity or aristocratic grandeur of Wellington, the robust roughness of Palmerston, the intellectual brilliance of Disraeli, the moral fervour of Gladstone, or even the endearing self-effacement of Aberdeen; only cold competence and methodical achievement. As a character, he is less fascinating than his remarkable father, who began life working with his hands, rose to become a baronet and to win a fortune by owning cotton-mills where pauper children were brutally exploited, and then became a pioneer in factory legislation and reform.

Peel, the Prime Minister, is remembered for what he accomplished, not for his personality; but his accomplishments are in one sense negative. Of all the important reforms of his time, he was in some degree responsible, the creation of the Metropolitan Police Force was the only one which he carried through with enthusiasm and on his own initiative. He supported the other reforms only after they had been proposed by others. This was not merely a case of a wise statesman and practical politician taking care not to be stampeded into supporting the schemes of some crackpot reformer before the necessary changes had been drawn back. Peel's opposition to the great reforming projects of his day went far beyond this; he opposed them after more than half the nation was clamouring for them. He did not support Catholic Emancipation until he had opposed it for twenty years. He did not give way over the Reform Bill of 1832 until the country was (or at least appeared to be) on the verge of revolution. As Home Secretary, he only abolished capital punishment for stealing and for forgery after he had shocked large sections of opinion by refusing to commute the death sentence passed on several thieves and forgers whose cases had aroused great public sympathy. Despite the example which his father had set, and his own energy in enforcing the Factory Acts against employers, he resisted the efforts of many MPs, led by his own backbencher Lord Ashley, to limit the working hours of children in factories, preventing the two-hours bill from becoming a rearguard action all the way. The most famous of all his decisions, the repeal of the Corn Laws, was not reached until after a long struggle with the Anti-Corn Law League, during which he went to the lengths of sending secret agents to spy on the organization in the hope of finding evidence to convict the leaders in the courts.

Peel's policy of resisting reforms until the last ditch, and then giving way when many of his supporters were prepared to fight to a fatal point, alienated the sympathy of his lower without winning the admiration of his opponents. Professor Gasht points out that in the last years of his life, Peel was a Conservative regarded Peel as one of themselves; but the verdict of historians, including Professor Gasht, has been that Peel was a patriot who put country before self. At first sight it may seem strange that a leader whose attitude was neither heroic nor laudable and who believed that statesmanship consisted in moving no faster and no slower than public opinion should have won such widespread admiration; but logic has been the dominating characteristic of British statesmen. Britain is not often been ruled by those who have played a leading part in the history of the country, but by those who have played a leading part in the history of the nation. Peel's political party, the Conservatives, was a much smaller party than the national leaders than in France or the United States. By the practice of giving way at the last moment, Peel set an example which has been regularly followed by his political party, the Conservatives, ever since. Peel's phrase, which he retained in his new book, "Though the myth of Conservatism has been more often Disraeli's practice has been almost uniformly Peel's."

It is interesting to note that Peel, who was a Tory, was a Tory because "we want to be as we can, to teach young men, perforce, men charged with the trust of government that, though they may be backed by popular clamour, they shall not overdo on the first springing of the first such group arose during his enforced sabbath at the (1812-22) on the Wartburg, when the neurotic puritan Andreas Kestner, assisted by the three other members of the church, took over the Wartburg. He had to be "preached out" by Luther on his return to the little Electoral capital. Soon afterwards the profound prophet Thomas Müntzer, a violent and total reformer of society. By promptly implicating himself with the great peasant revolt of 1524-25 Müntzer had little more than an accidental place in Marxist mythology. Meanwhile Anabaptist congresses had begun to proliferate in various parts of central Europe. They have been rightly differentiated by Troeltsch from the "spiritualists", exemplified here by

Swenckfeld, who stressed the inner light as opposed to the Book. Against all these people Luther struck a succession of hard and satirical blows. More surprisingly, his resentment carried over into an equally bitter opposition to Zwingli into his own age (Calvinism II, 4-5). In Luther's view, the Zwinglians on every point, except on that personal version of the Real Presence which Luther stubbornly demanded before he would accept them as brother Christians. Even during his later years he joined in harsh conflicts with other "false brethren", including the Antinomians headed by Johann Agricola.

All these opponents and others have lately been banded together under the highly accurate and heretic "the Radical Reformation", yet they had few characteristics in common save a lingering respect for Luther's early work, coupled with a bitter conviction that he had spilt out too much blood. Beyond even his volcanic energy, Agricola all he was beset by the fear that extremists could so easily ruin the Reformation, by causing it to be blamed for the civil and religious chaos which had supervened. Agricola was no doubt a capable politician, but he had become a political calculator. With painful candour and total sincerity he put the emphasis upon spiritual dangers arising from false religious and social teachings. And more vulgarly, he saw in the swift

Town and borough

By R. H. Hill

KEITH KISSACK:
Monmouth
The Making of a County Town
345pp. Chichester: Phillimore, £4.50.

DOUGLAS J. ELLIOTT:
Buckingham
The Royal and Ancient Borough
262pp. Chichester: Phillimore, £4.50.

In identical jackets, each providing a view from an early period, these two books are a pair and should be read together. They do so. In both Monmouth and Buckingham, the treatment is subject rather than by following a strict chronology, so that the book separate chapters and order. In both, the author's style is clear and to the point. Both are well qualified, Keith Kissack as Monmouth's curator, Douglas Elliott as Buckingham's historian. Both are well qualified, Kissack as Monmouth's curator, Douglas Elliott as Buckingham's historian. Both are well qualified, Kissack as Monmouth's curator, Douglas Elliott as Buckingham's historian.

This is, altogether, essentially old-fashioned local history, sound and good of its kind, but not quite what we look for in a book of this kind. The one thing that does need to be said is that the only map provided, a vast fold-out sheet, is a very poor one. It is a pity that the book should be so poorly illustrated. The map is a very poor one. It is a pity that the book should be so poorly illustrated. The map is a very poor one. It is a pity that the book should be so poorly illustrated.

Heavens below

By J. F. C. Harrison

CLARKE GARRETT:
Millenarians and the French Revolution
in France and England
237pp. Johns Hopkins University Press, £5.50.

In February 1792 the prophetic Suzanne Labrousse set out from the village of Vauxais in Perigord on a pilgrimage to Rome. She was barefoot and dressed in rags. Her mission was to announce the Last Days and she expected to initiate some glorious eschatological event after her arrival. Seven months later she was imprisoned in Castello, Saint Angelo, where she remained for five and a half years until released by the French army when it occupied Rome. The pilgrimage, said Pierre Fontana (a Jacobin bishop and her supporter), was a "respectable folly".

At about the same time, in

England, Richard Brothers proclaimed his mission as Nephew of the Almighty and Prince of the Hebrews. He saw "Satan walking leisurely into London; his face had a snile, but under it his looks were grim, crafty, and deceitful. On the right side of his forehead were seven dark spots, and he was dressed in white and scarlet robes. Over this, he says, 'I was in vision, and saw a large river run through London coloured with human blood'. He was greatly troubled, and interceded with God to spare London and its people from their justly merited destruction; and after ten days God spoke to him: 'agreed: 'All, All, I pardon London and all the people in it, for your sake.' In 1795 a nervous government arrested Brothers, and he was taken before the Privy Council. After his arrival, Seven months later she was imprisoned in Castello, Saint Angelo, where she remained for five and a half years until released by the French army when it occupied Rome. The pilgrimage, said Pierre Fontana (a Jacobin bishop and her supporter), was a "respectable folly".

These somewhat bizarre happenings serve to highlight the existence of millenarian movements and currents of thought in the 1790s. Attention has already been drawn to the importance of millenarianism

by social historians working on aspects of popular culture in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, and even more in the seventeenth century. Clarke Garrett's *Respectable Folly* is a valuable study of this growing current of millenarianism in the eighteenth century. His method is to select three prophetic tracts—Suzanne Labrousse and Catherine Théot in France, and Richard Brothers in England—who interpreted the political events of the French revolutionary period in eschatological terms. Their ideas and careers are rounded out by reference to the millenarian free-masons of the Avignon Society, the Convulsionnaires of Lyons, and the English dissenting tradition of Joseph Priestley. Professor Garrett does not have much to say about the social composition of millenarian movements. He sees the millenarians he has selected not as "representatives of mass movements or sects-in-the-making but rather as exponents of a theme that is but a single strand in a complex fabric of ideas and attitudes which make up the popular culture of the revolutionary period."

The first response of most (non-specialist) readers to *Respectable*

Folly is likely to be amazement at the fascinating gallery of characters here assembled—characters who, as the author observes, were "on the periphery of history. For the specialist there are excellent footnotes to the sources, and references calculated to provoke further research. Here is the story of Count Tadous, Grabianka, the wealthy Polish nobleman, who was to be king of the New Israel, and who gave a millenarian twist to the mysticism and occultism of the Avignon Society. Here too are the details of William Bryan and John Wright, two English working men, who in 1789 made the journey from London to Avignon because (so they testified) they were commanded to do so by the Spirit. The early history of Swedenborgianism figures prominently in this account, with backward glances to Jakob Boehme and William Law. Or again there is a chapter on the popular piety of "Mother Catherine" Théot, the daughter of illiterate peasants and (like Joanna Southcott) a domestic servant. Her followers can be identified from police files, and small shopkeepers and servants. The great majority were women.

The pitfalls of millenarian scholarship are numerous, but Professor Garrett skilfully avoids them. He never falls into the reductionist interpretation of making millenarianism a simple response to economic and social conditions; nor does he seek to equate it with the solely with the poor and oppressed. He questions E. P. Thompson's description of the "sudden emergence of millenarian fantasies" in 1793 and 1794 as a response to the phenomenon of a long tradition of popular piety that included a strong element of millenarianism. The "chiliasm of despair" is not adequate to describe the beliefs of the followers of Richard Brothers and Joanna Southcott.

However, Professor Garrett does not (as he admits) probe very far into the history of the followers of his selected millenarian leaders. It is regrettable that in a book on this topic he manages to avoid that overworked word, *charisma*. Yet it is difficult to write about the relationship between a prophet and his followers without using it. It is so far as a characteristic of the millenarian movement of a long tradition of popular piety that included a strong element of millenarianism. The "chiliasm of despair" is not adequate to describe the beliefs of the followers of Richard Brothers and Joanna Southcott.

In other words, Luther was over-looked by tasks beyond even his volcanic energy. Agricola all he was beset by the fear that extremists could so easily ruin the Reformation, by causing it to be blamed for the civil and religious chaos which had supervened. Agricola was no doubt a capable politician, but he had become a political calculator. With painful candour and total sincerity he put the emphasis upon spiritual dangers arising from false religious and social teachings. And more vulgarly, he saw in the swift

achievement through his special

The view from the Escorial

By Henry Kamen

PHILIP PIERSON:
Philip II of Spain
Philip, Thomas and Hudson, £6.50.

Philip II of Spain's ambitious new office in the Office series gets off to a promising start with a study of the sixteenth century's most powerful monarch. Philip II received a very early start in his own day and has been adequately served by historians. The volume of material available on his life and policies is vast, but the complexity of political and administrative life has tended to obscure the king himself into the background. This has left the way open for a number of biographies, usually by English writers, which have obscured the king's life and policies by a series of specific aspects of his reign.

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to paper, and certainly never made a public speech. His private life remains virtually a closed book, apart from a few surviving letters to his daughters. It is a pity that the king's private life remains virtually a closed book, apart from a few surviving letters to his daughters. It is a pity that the king's private life remains virtually a closed book, apart from a few surviving letters to his daughters.

Peter Pierson has overcome most of the difficulties and produced a remarkable tour de force. Within a small space he has fitted not only a study of the king's character and methods of government, but also a summary of the whole of western European history relative to Philip's reign. He has placed the king's reign in its proper context, and a reader has to proceed carefully to follow the thread of events, particularly in foreign policy. But the work as a whole deserves a high praise. It is a remarkable tour de force. Within a small space he has fitted not only a study of the king's character and methods of government, but also a summary of the whole of western European history relative to Philip's reign. He has placed the king's reign in its proper context, and a reader has to proceed carefully to follow the thread of events, particularly in foreign policy. But the work as a whole deserves a high praise.

His *Philip II* is an achievement derived from several historical sources. It is a remarkable tour de force. Within a small space he has fitted not only a study of the king's character and methods of government, but also a summary of the whole of western European history relative to Philip's reign. He has placed the king's reign in its proper context, and a reader has to proceed carefully to follow the thread of events, particularly in foreign policy. But the work as a whole deserves a high praise.

mental facilities for the last ten years of his life must probably be admitted; the hardening of his policies in the 1590s would seem to parallel the hardening of his arteries. He sets Philip firmly in the context of his time, and consequently offers us perhaps the most acceptable and plausible portrait of the king so far drawn by any historian. The failings are explained rather than glossed over. An interesting and wholly reasonable point is made that Philip's initial restraint towards the Netherlands contributed to his failure there. As the contemporary biographer wrote: "The affection the king bore them was a good part of the ruin of both."

Professor Pierson's central chapter, on government, is probably the best brief summary of the subject. It closely analyzes the king's methods of controlling his ministers and lays bare the complex problems which hampered Philip. Pierson accepts that Philip's attempt to make all the major decisions, and to encourage differing counsels among his ministers, led to failure, but doubts whether Philip was ever a "great" ruler. He committed himself to courses of action which by temperament he would have preferred to avoid, raising within him contradictory impulses and leading to his indecision. The conclusion may be rather too far to the king. An unusual omission in the study of government is any mention of the effect of sale of office and over-employment on the efficiency of administration. This is unfortunate too that Richard

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Kamen's *Students and Society in Early Modern Spain* (TLS May 23, 1975) came out too late to be used by the author.

The discussion of foreign policy issues, Professor Pierson rightly stresses that Philip was not the English and Dutch propaganda of an imperialist aggressor, but a conservative trying desperately to hold together the empire bequeathed by his father. As the Venetian ambassador reported in 1559: "Philip II aimed, not to wage war so that he can add to his kingdom, but to wage peace so that he can keep the lands he has."

Any account of Philip II leaves one with the curious impression of a monarch cut off from his subjects. Ministers like Idiaquez, who made decisions on war had never in fact seen war, others who made decisions on America had never seen America. Philip himself was never one for travel, enclosed in his monastic robes, he was unwilling to trust too much to any single set of advisers, unable to master the masses of paperwork supplied to him. He was never away from the palace, and he whom he ruled, not even by the Castilians. Professor Pierson says nothing about this lack of a common touch, which surely was exceptional among western European monarchs of the time. But among the few omissions in this highly successful book. He has written an excellent account which is both original and scholarly, informative and readable; an impressive achievement by any standards.

Professor Garrett's *Respectable Folly* is a valuable study of this growing current of millenarianism in the eighteenth century. His method is to select three prophetic tracts—Suzanne Labrousse and Catherine Théot in France, and Richard Brothers in England—who interpreted the political events of the French revolutionary period in eschatological terms. Their ideas and careers are rounded out by reference to the millenarian free-masons of the Avignon Society, the Convulsionnaires of Lyons, and the English dissenting tradition of Joseph Priestley. Professor Garrett does not have much to say about the social composition of millenarian movements. He sees the millenarians he has selected not as "representatives of mass movements or sects-in-the-making but rather as exponents of a theme that is but a single strand in a complex fabric of ideas and attitudes which make up the popular culture of the revolutionary period."

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